

PROGRESSIVE STRENGTH EXERCISES FOR POSTURE AND CORE STABILITY

TALL SITS



Tall Sits is the most basic ABLE Bodies exercise. It serves as the basis for all tall posture activities and is the form from which most of the exercises begin. While doing a good tall sit, if participants were looking in a mirror, they should be able to see a clear difference in their height. Between their relaxed slump and the Tall Sit there should be a height difference of 2 to 4 inches (5-10 centimeters).

Benefits »

- ◉ Improves posture and core stability.
- ◉ Strengthens core muscles, especially the back extensors and abdominals.
- ◉ Teaches neutral spine.

How to Do It »

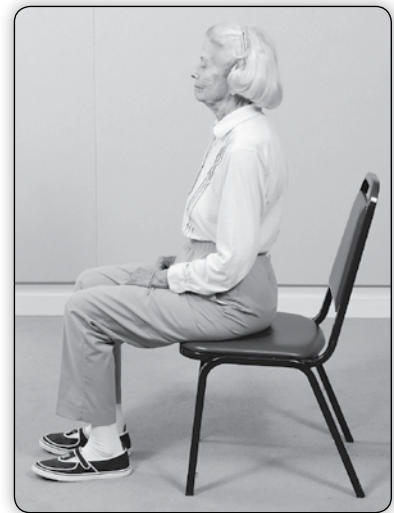
If you can provide mirrors for participants to observe themselves it may be helpful for this activity. Many facilities have a room with mirrors or mirrored closets. Some variations need a balloon or a balance disc.

The Start

- ◉ Sit all the way to the back of the chair, but without resting against the chair back (the hips but not the back should touch the chair back).
- ◉ Sit with shoulders over hips, head retracted slightly, and chin level.
- ◉ Place feet flat on the floor, hip-width apart.

The Moves

- ◉ Inhale and lift the ribs to lengthen the spine.
- ◉ Pull the abdominal wall in and up tightly to help brace the midsections.
- ◉ Exhale, staying tall and pulling the shoulder blades back and down.
- ◉ Hold this tall sitting position 3 to 5 seconds, while exhaling.
- ◉ Relax and slump a bit.
- ◉ Repeat the exercise four times and build up to doing eight repetitions, as tolerated.



Take It Further »

- ◉ Do fewer repetitions, but hold the Tall Sit position longer, for 10 to 15 seconds and up to 30 seconds. Continue to breathe fully while holding the Tall Sit.
- ◉ Add simple arm movements.
 - Genie Arms: Cross the arms and hold them away from the chest.
 - Hold arms out to the side.
 - Single-arm overhead reaching: Starting with hands on knees, pull one arm up until reaching overhead. Do the same with the other.
- ◉ Add small knee lifts with one knee and then the other.

Give It More Balance »

Draw participants' attention to what they are learning from their body. Ask them what differences they feel in their posture when sitting taller. Do they notice how much their spine lengthens with each tall sit? Are they able to lift their ribs? Did they feel themselves bracing their core muscles? Try these variations to add more balance.

- ⦿ Sit closer to the edge of the chair; balance and core stability become a little more challenging with less back and leg support.
- ⦿ Sit at the front of a chair and place feet in an offset position (shoulder-width apart, one forward, one back).
- ⦿ Sit at the front of a chair and place feet in a tandem position (heel of front foot touches toe of back foot).
- ⦿ Use the tandem or offset position with the heels lifted off the floor.
- ⦿ Add slow head turns, with the emphasis on maintaining a Tall Sit.
- ⦿ Tap a balloon back and forth between hands while maintaining a Tall Sit.
- ⦿ Place the feet on top of a balloon or balance disc on the floor.
- ⦿ Tall Sit on a balance disc in a chair with arms.

Keep It Safe »

The Tall Sit should be pain free. Cue participants to lengthen the spine by lifting their ribs, not with their shoulders. There is a tendency for participants to hold their breath whenever they pull in their abdominal muscles; encourage them to practice breathing in and out while tall sitting.

Live It »

Participants should feel and see a clear difference in their height as they sit tall. Between their relaxed slump and the tall sit there should be a height difference of 2 to 4 inches (5-10 centimeters). It's amazing! Practice tall sitting daily.